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A. Allan Allanson Field Notes. On file,
Sweeney Granite
Mountains Desert Research Center,
Kelso, California.

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SAN NICOLAS ISLAND ASSIGNMENT.

Pt. Mugu - 1230

5-8-64

After months of inactivity and fruitless job hunting the usual of course developed. First of all it seemed necessary that Sibyl cease working at Walker Scott's where the tasks were getting her down.

~~First of all~~ ^{Secondly} Dr. Folsom after several postponements and delays seemed to indicate a desire for my services on San Nicolas for the mussel study.

This was to be the week end of 5/8/64.

Then Marine Advisers called & asked if I'd go to St. John's New Brunswick & the Bay of Fundy for a current study. This was to be for a week or two so I accepted although it meant cancelling out for S.I.O. & the San "Nic" job.

After informing Dr. Folsom of plans I had a call back from M.A. informing me that the deal was off & that the firm in Canada was going to do their own field work. So back I crawled to Dr. Folsom's office & expressed my willingness to do the assignment as originally scheduled. So it was set up.

In the meantime I received a long distance call from an engineering

firm in L.A. that wanted to hire me for some beach profile work at the San Onofre Atomic Power Plant site. Yes of course for the same week end. I had to stick to my S.I.O. commitment and tried to encourage them to wait for my return.

Anyway, what an ordeal to need the work so badly & then be forced to lose some assignments because of the similar times needed. If I could have done all the requests it would have been a nice month. As it is I guess I should be grateful for any & all.

at present I'm on the Pt. Mugu missile Base and waiting for my 1400 flight to San Nicolas Island. Sibyl stays in Laguna Beach at the folks until my return.

1245- Here sitting in the parking lot alone I have a little time to relax & bring up to date the notes. Once again I am bound for one of the Channel Islands.

Six years ago I hiked the rugged ridges of S.N. carrying the gear of Bob Morris. I gathered data for his geology thesis. It was great then. I found 2 wonderful little Indian mounds and a green colored net weight. Discovered some petroglyphs

SAN NICOLAS ISLAND FIELD TRIP

in a sea cave.

Little did I expect to return to this navy held island. Something about islands lure me. They cast a magic spell over me as I dream of their coves & quiet waters. Uninhabited beaches & wonderful wreckage & drifts from far away places. Every turn & cove has a secret to be explored.

Originally it was planned that Dave Young & Dr. Folsom would accompany me but the usual snafu occurred and they left the deal to me.

If I can get the study materials from the island as well as I did on the Baja Mexico assignments I might be in line for more collecting and even to Midway & Wake.

This oceanic radio-activity tests can lead to a routine collecting series all over the Pacific Ocean for years to come.

1430 - aboard DC3 & airborne for San Nicolas. It seems that the island will be fairly de-populated for the week end. I talked with some of the fellows that are flying out with me. It is hazy but I recognize Anacapa off the starboard.

S.D. TO PT MUGU
 APPROX 230 MILES
 LAS POSAS RD OFF VENTURA
 FRYW. TO MUGU.

35 minutes for the flight. The island looked small after being associated with San Clemente.

At the air Terminal I signed in and a fellow passenger gave me a lift to the B.O.A. After a little confusion I located the linen & bunk room, a colored fellow named Allison

I get lodging free but pay for meals. My room was a fine one with only 2 beds and no companion. Good cabinets & desk. They issue a key and I felt quite comfortable.

Across the hall are two other civilians and we have been together a great deal.

I checked in with a Lt. Shopper and he gave me the Chief's jeep and permission to tour the island with only one restriction.

So for the first day I've done OK I believe. After Chow I took the jeep & my 2 companions Harry & Lora and we drove to the island's west end. It was late but I found several pieces of Indian fish hooks & one bone awl.*

Mussel signs were poor in the middens but maybe they will be better tomorrow.

What a thrill to have transportation

Little ^{CW} near West End - Shore Yang. too.

and be roaming about my island.

Also a nice surprise was the finding of my note from Sibyl when I went to brush my teeth. She is worth all my troubles and I love her. I know we must go to San Miguel now. The old hut was there this afternoon when I found the fish hooks.

I am sitting in my bunk writing this all alone. In all the bunk house there are only these two rooms occupied.

5/9/64 - Sat.

San Nicolas Is.

Right now it's midnite & I've just completed preparing 100 mussel meats for the isotope lab. Too tired to write but what a day -

2 pestles - ²⁴⁰⁹ 2410
 fish hooks

Elephant Seals
 Harbor Seals

awls & misc

G. B. Heron

Jeep tour!

No lunch - fun

Pheasants

A Great day

Later: On Saturday I scouted the perimeter of the island. First of all I drove the jeep down to the beach on the northeast end of the island about where I circled the chart star. I had to wait until the fuel depot opened before I could

Since I was using my time to

search middens of course. With the jeep tucked away in a dune I headed over toward a big sand dune midden.

In one little blow out area I crawled about searching for fish hooks when I saw a piece of stone barely showing. I dug it out & found a nice whole pestle. ²⁴¹⁰ Thinking I'd better dig a little further I hiked back to the jeep & returned with the shovel. My first shovel of sand brought up another pestle ²⁴¹⁰ as perfect as the original but all the other excavating brought nothing.

By this time it was time to fuel so back to top-side I drove feeling highly exhilarated with my good luck. On the way I saw a cock pheasant & learned later that they were planted here successfully.

All day long I poked my way around the island stopping to search middens & check the coast for possible mussel collecting areas.

Dropping down from the B.O.Q. to the shore I began the coastal drive a few miles north of the sand spit. From there and across the spit the road was graded & good. Lt. Shafer had warned me of a contaminated

area here due to a rocket engine burn up accident. Apparently barium ash could contaminate the air & dust one breathes. I was told later the area was safe now but they leave the scare on. An attempt is being made to build a breakwater near the spit on the north side but little success is being found.

On around the south side to Dutch Harbor. At times I had to stop and walk ahead to check the road since it had washed or blown away. On two occasions I drove on the beach to by pass some particular difficult areas.

It was thrilling to be all alone on an island with a vehicle & permission to roam. It being the week-end I encountered no one except a couple of sailors going fishing.

Lunch time came & found me miles from the B.O.Q. and I wouldn't have given up a precious minute of my joyous adventure.

There were my old friends the elephant seals and thousands of sea lions. Big male sea lions were dominating their harems & 4 great " "

Blue Heron flapped off and one lone mallard duck flew up from a tiny pond.

I continued on around the island until I came to a major canyon about 2 miles past Dutch Harbor. At this point the road became real messy and being all alone I thought it inadvisable to press my luck too far. I never trail climbed up the east side of the canyon & eventually came out on top behind bldg 148. It was 4 wheel drive all the way for the little jeep and I was very favorably impressed with the vehicle.

The Lt. Shafer had given me the chief's personal jeep and it was in good shape.

From topside I took the black-top on out to the west side and hit the coast again approximately 4 miles farther west than where I had pulled out previously.

From here the road follows the shore closely and goes by a rock crush where they make material for the roads.

At the northwest end I climbed over the dunes and the road became dubious at many places but always

* Learned that it was towed & placed in that spot.

I managed to manipulate thru somehow. My greatest fear was going down a too steep a dune and then being unable to climb back out if I later found myself trapped. This can occur especially if you tear the crust up going down.

Shortly after rounding the island and starting down the north side I came upon a big 4 engine bomber, a tank, a truck and a smaller fighter plane all sitting in the dune area. The plane I believe was an old PB4Y-2 made into a drone.

I was told that this plane was flown in there but it's unbelievable to me. The wheels are all in tack w/ tires etc. Landing gear good. No torn sections about. Yet this plane would have needed to slide across numerous gullies deep enough to have demolished it. The engines were removed & bullet holes riddled the fuselage. I am still curious to learn the exact way that plane came to be there in the condition it is. Not far from here there is a small aircraft carrier on the rocks. I heard that it had been anchored off shore and broken.

away in a storm. Anyway there it sits, a rusty derelict foretorn and rusting away. From this location on the road becomes increasingly worse until one reaches the fenced in restricted bldg. near Sheep Landing. Then it is blacktop and connects up with where I had originally started.

I didn't return back to B.O. Q. until after dark and a cold moist wind made life dismal. Too late for chow at the regular mess but I walked over to the beer palace & my new friend Red Mason fixed me up with a hot dog sandwich & chili beans. Tasted good and I was weary but content again.

Sun 5/10/64

San Nicolas Is

Rose early this morning & found a sunny day awaiting. Breakfast in the mess was the usual mess. Greasy sausage, cold fried potatoes, leather pancakes & gooey sweet cakes.

Once again I fueled up my jeep and my friend Glen Thorn — — — waved me off. Today I drove to the rock crusher site & turned back along the coast toward Dutch Harbor. I wanted to hike the area between where I'd been ^{born} wable ~~sh~~ to drive

Soon I faced a big soft sand dune with a very steep slope. I probably could have risked the chance and passed thru but alone this way I — — — forced the chance of being stuck and a long useless walk for help. Of equal importance would be my loss of time to explore and search the middens.

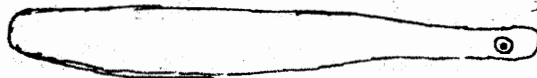
The hike along the coast took me thru many middens and I could only spot check occasionally if I wanted to make any distance.

In one dune I knelt to rest and search. Soon I had picked up several nice disc beads* and my day was a happy one for me. Down below me on the coastal rocks I believe was the ledge where I discovered the petroglyphs on the previous trip and later published thru the Santa Barbara museum. This time I didn't waste time in re-checking them but continued on down the coast toward Dutch Harbor.

Weary and tired at about 1:00 pm I decided to rest by a dune overlooking the Elephant Seal beach. I was walking along an old jeep trail thru the dunes & spotted a nice abalone shell fish hook.*¹⁵¹² With more searching in the dune I jumped with delight . . .

when I made my best find of the trip. There completely exposed and waiting just for me was a beautiful stone pendant.

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It was nicely drilled from both sides & perfectly preserved. It was my greatest thrill.

I spent the rest of the day scouting the dunes and worked back around the island to the area where the bomber was. Several nice fish hooks* were added with two being beautiful. One was a rather large one and well preserved. On the dune near the plane I stopped and found a hollow bone ^{#2295} awl & with carved rings encircling the piece. At first I thought it was a piece of lobster antennae.

The wind & sand reflection after the hours of exposure drove me to the bunk house and a shower before dark. It had been one of the most enjoyable days and I knew Sibyl would enjoy seeing the artifacts.

Mon - 5-11-64

Fog held up the Mugu plane until about 11:00 a.m. so I didn't get started homeward until afternoon.

The drive down the Ventura freeway and thru L.A. was a hot dry one. Smog filled the air and I detected it. In Laguna I found Sibyl & the folks waiting to eat late lunch with me. We had a good evening and everyone seemed to be pleased with my relics. We stayed over night and drove to San Diego early the next morning.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be on San Nicolas once again. Each time I think it will be my last.